



Preliminary

18th Street POC and Mini-Parks Improvement Plan

San Bruno Avenue E Neighborhood Association

Mariposa/18th/Utah/San Bruno W (MUNA) Neighborhood Association



West Side of 18th Street POC



East Side of 18th Street POC

Background

The October 5, 2010 meeting titled "Community Crime Watch & Public Safety Meeting" sponsored by the McKinley Square Park Foundation, raised the idea of closing the 18th Street and 22nd Street POCs by adding gates. Another meeting was planned for October 19th to continue discussion of the idea. Before the meeting, both the McKinley Square Park Foundation and the San Bruno Neighborhood Association conducted polls of their members seeking their opinions. The polled neighbors generally supported some sort of timed closure. Other neighbors and neighbors on the west side of 101 were later made aware of the idea and were generally opposed to gates at any time. The October 19th meeting ended without agreement, however the consensus was to have Mark Alvarado, Downtown HS Principal, call another meeting with heads of the community groups, police and SAFE representatives to work out safety improvements that all sides could agree on. The results of that December 7th meeting related to the 18th Street POC were to be delivered to the District 10 Supervisor by Mark Alvarado. Related to the 18th Street POC they were:

Recommended objectives for the immediate area of the 18th street and 22nd footbridges:

Common Objectives:

- *Additional Beautification / graffiti removal Note: beautification is currently happening to some degree.*
- *Additional/continual vegetation maintenance*
- *Cameras*

Neighborhood Specific Objectives:

18th Street

- *Fence "pushed back"*
- *Additional lighting*
- *Re-visit partial bridge closure in July 2011*

This Plan

Since the 18th Street POC is directly between the areas that the two neighborhood groups serve, 3 members of each group were invited to volunteer for a new committee, "18th Street POC and Mini-Parks Improvement Committee" in order to address the areas on which agreement exists. This plan has three parts, a discussion of what is valuable about the POC and mini-parks, a discussion of problems and a proposal for solutions.

The Good

The 18th Street POC provides a walker and biker access between both sides of a neighborhood divided in the 1950s by Highway 101. The alternative walker-biker access is under the 17th street overpass which is constantly filled with homeless encampments and is both dark and dirty. The POC begins and ends with community developed landscaping and mini-parks begun in 1970 by the Potrero Boosters. The East side gives neighbors the opportunity to work on their own plot in a community garden as well as a spot to sit and chat with neighbors. The West side sports a mini-park which, in the last ten years, has been partially maintained by the SF Recreation and Park department and partially maintained by the neighborhood volunteers. In 2008 a Community Challenge grant for \$40,000 was used to beautify the southern part of the park. The community has plans for the northern section. The bridge is structurally sound and has lighting on the bridge pathway. It was reconstructed in 1970 after being knocked down by a truck. The POC and parks give residents and visitors access to beautiful views and encourages them to travel on foot or on bike, saving the environment from CO₂ and improving the health of those who take advantage of the opportunity. When well maintained, the POC is an asset to the community.

Both the East and West side of the 18th Street POC have community groups that have put a lot of effort into beautifying the areas. On the West side, the MUNA group received a Community Challenge grant in 2009 and

redid the landscaping of the southern part of the mini-park. The group cleans, plants and weeds the area and has large work parties at 2 month intervals. The group has plans for additional improvements that need capital resources. On the East side of the bridge the San Bruno Neighborhood Group has created "The Benches Garden" which complements "The Benches" park at the entrance to the bridge for the east side. Neighbors on both sides of the bridge care for small plots in the community garden.

The Bad

The 18th Street POC suffers from a number of urban ills. People often use the garbage cans on the east and west side to dump garbage that should be taken to the city dump. The bridge path and walls are often a target for graffiti. The mini-park on the Utah Street side is quite dark at night and often has homeless sleeping in the dark spaces and drug use. With the improvements done with the Community Challenge grant, there has been a marked improvement in the south side of the park, but lighting improvements are still needed on the north side as well as on the San Bruno side. Trash is a constant problem around the bridge and in the landscaping, as there is no regular sweeping up of trash. Though there are neighborhood volunteers for the Utah street mini-park, and for the Benches community garden, the volunteer program needs to be better developed.

The Solutions

A. Lighting

Please see attachment A for the location of additional lighting.

- 1) East side #1 – Add a light to this existing utility pole. The light should brighten a dark area which often sports cars involved in drug dealing. There are other lights on utility poles, so this new light should follow that design.
- 2) East side #2 – Add another light arm to an existing light pole and focus the arm on the community garden.
- 3) West side #3 - Add another light arm to an existing light pole and focus the arm on the mini-park north
- 4) West side # 4-5 – Add poles near the retaining wall to light the park at night and discourage homeless sleepers. If possible make these solar powered.

B. Landscaping for maximum visibility

Develop a landscaping plan that emphasizes visibility while not sacrificing beauty.

East side of bridge

- Caltrans will add a small gage black chain-link fence closer to the freeway, making a triangle with the existing fence. The existing fence will be removed, giving access to the small triangle of land. This land will be landscaped with drought resistant native plants.
- Remove the large ivy plants that impede visibility. Keep the Caltrans property weeded and landscaped with low height native plants as well as trees with long trunks and high branches.

West side of the bridge

- Support the neighborhoods plan to upgrade the northern section of the park. This plan was submitted to the Community Challenge Grant program at the end of 2010.
- Continue cutting back bushes and branches that reduce visibility. The objective is to have landscaping that while attractive, provides visibility for all directions.

Develop a community based landscaping program that is supported by RPD and DWP and supplied with plants, mulch and the transporting of green garbage resulting from work parties.

C. Cameras on the bridge

Purchase two high quality outdoor cameras which support wireless data transmission and contain enough memory to capture two days of activity. The camera should be motion sensitive and should be capable of capturing an escaping wrongdoer or a graffiti painter.

The purpose of the cameras will be to capture illegal behavior after the fact so that the criminal can be identified. Additionally the camera can provide more information documenting the current bridge usage patterns.

The camera will be able to be accessed by neighbors with wireless computer setups that live near enough to the cameras

The cameras will require access to the existing electricity on the bridge.

D. Bridge Mural

We would like to involve the local high school students in a creating a bridge mural. Ideas we have for locations are

- a) The 4 concrete slabs on either side of the bridge (2 on each side)
- b) The bridge floor and the floor of the circular pathway
- c) The concrete bridge support on the west side of the bridge and
- d) The concrete pillars on the west side of the bridge.

We would like to work with the San Francisco Art Commission's StreetSmARTS program to accomplish this. This mural would have two purposes 1) to beautify the bridge and 2) to involve the local high school students in a neighborhood program to build community.

Some recommendations for colors related to the sections a-d for discussion: a) painted blue for ease of toughing up graffiti b) light neutral color with a non-slip surface c)+ d) Once the surface was cleaned and prepared I would propose to use 'lime' paint . 'Lime' paint refers to the type of paint and not color. The purpose for using a lime base application is that it becomes part of the concrete substrate and will weather naturally over time. A mural could still be done with 'lime' paint.

E. Painting

Bridge Floor and walkway floor – The bridge floor is the target of graffiti. Graffiti is removed inconsistently which results in an ugly patchwork effect. We would like to start with a solid color that is on both the bridge floor and the curved walkway floor. We would like to have the paint so we can act immediately to repair any problems.

Chain link – Current chain link fence is rusted and ugly. We would like to first prime the fence and then paint it in a complementary color.

Concrete pillars – A color needs to be identified for the concrete pillars on the west side of the POC. We need DPW or RPD to paint the entire surface in one color and give us that color to repair problems

F. Maintenance Plan

Graffiti Removal – for a month organize daily graffiti monitoring and removal using the correct colors and executed by the neighborhood volunteers.

Appendix A – Lighting Needs



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Appendix B – Painting Needs



Bridge Floor is spotted with Graffiti removal Attempts

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